

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:)
Gordon S. BAXTER et al.) GAU: 2168
Application No. : 10/509,106) Examiner: Jay A. Morrison
Filed: September 27, 2004) Attorney Docket No.: 000131-00019
For: DATABASE SEARCHING METHOD) Date: February 12, 2008
AND SYSTEM

REPLY BRIEF

Mail Stop Appeal Brief – Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

The Appellant, through undersigned counsel, respectfully submits the present Reply Brief to address the arguments raised in the Examiner's Answer mailed December 12, 2007.

In section (10) on pages 14-16, the Examiner's Answer includes a response to the arguments presented in the Appeal Brief. The Appellant will consider each part of the response in turn.

On pages 14-15, regarding the claim limitation that the selected data are semantically normalized in the data repository and manipulated so as to speed the querying, the Examiner's Answer cites *Hazlehurst et al* at column 2, lines 35-38. However, as already explained in the Appeal Brief in the first through third full paragraphs of page 4, that teaching in the reference refers to refining the semantic structure of the vector spaces rather than that of the data themselves.

On pages 15-16, the Examiner's Answer attempts to address that distinction. The Examiner's Answer includes a long discussion of the difference between semantic normalization of the data and semantic normalization of the data structures and notes that according to the claim language, it is the data themselves that are semantically normalized. The Examiner's Answer then quotes two more passages from *Hazlehurst* and asserts that those passages read on the semantic normalization recited in the claims. However, the two quoted passages deal with the vectors, not with the data themselves. Contrary to the assertion in the Examiner's Answer, in *Hazlehurst*, the data themselves are not stored in the vectors; instead, the vectors merely represent documents (see, e.g., the paragraph spanning columns 4 and 5). Accordingly, the semantic normalization is not a semantic normalization of the data themselves, as the Examiner's Answer itself sets forth that concept. Thus, that argument in the Examiner's Answer, far from rebutting the Appellant's position, actually strengthens it.

Finally, the Examiner's Answer alleges that *Hazlehurst* "relates to a type of semantic normalization regardless of whether the data is stored in vectors or any form as long as the very broadly defined limitation is met by the prior art." However, as explained above, the applied prior art does not meet that limitation. Both the portions of the reference cited in the Examiner's Answer and the definition of the claim limitation set forth in the Examiner's Answer show as much.

For the reasons set forth above and in the Appeal Brief, the Appellant respectfully urges reversal of all outstanding grounds of rejection.

Respectfully submitted,

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